

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 897 Session of 2023

INTRODUCED BY KINKEAD, ISAACSON, CIRESI, MADDEN, McANDREW, WARREN, SIEGEL, SANCHEZ, MALAGARI, HILL-EVANS, PARKER, ROZZI, CONKLIN, NEILSON, HOWARD, GREEN, GUZMAN, KENYATTA, WEBSTER AND TAKAC, APRIL 17, 2023

AS AMENDED ON SECOND CONSIDERATION, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, JUNE 22, 2023

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), entitled "An
2 act relating to the public school system, including certain
3 provisions applicable as well to private and parochial
4 schools; amending, revising, consolidating and changing the
5 laws relating thereto," in transfers of credits between
6 institutions of higher education, further providing for
7 DEFINITIONS AND FOR duties of public institutions of higher <--
8 education, providing for guaranteed admission, for <--
9 articulation agreements, for reports to General Assembly and
10 for dispute resolution and further providing for Transfer and
11 Articulation Oversight Committee, FOR DUTIES OF DEPARTMENT <--
12 and for applicability.

13 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
14 hereby enacts as follows:

15 Section 1. Section 2002 C(c)(1) of the act of March 10, 1949 <--
16 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, is
17 amended to read:

18 SECTION 1. SECTION 2001-C OF THE ACT OF MARCH 10, 1949 <--
19 (P.L.30, NO.14), KNOWN AS THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CODE OF 1949, IS

20 AMENDED BY ADDING DEFINITIONS TO READ:

21 SECTION 2001-C. DEFINITIONS.

1 THE FOLLOWING WORDS AND PHRASES WHEN USED IN THIS ARTICLE
2 SHALL HAVE THE MEANINGS GIVEN TO THEM IN THIS SECTION UNLESS THE
3 CONTEXT CLEARLY INDICATES OTHERWISE:

4 * * *

5 "PARALLEL BACCALAUREATE DEGREE PROGRAM." A BACHELOR'S DEGREE
6 PROGRAM IN A COMPARABLE FIELD OF STUDY AND WITH SIMILAR
7 FOUNDATION-LEVEL, MAJOR-SPECIFIC COMPETENCIES AS AN ASSOCIATE
8 DEGREE PROGRAM, AS ARTICULATED IN PROGRAM-TO-PROGRAM AGREEMENTS.

9 * * *

10 "RECEIVING INSTITUTION." THE PUBLIC INSTITUTION OF HIGHER
11 EDUCATION WHERE A TRANSFER STUDENT PLANS TO ENROLL AND TO APPLY
12 PREVIOUSLY EARNED CREDIT TOWARD A DEGREE PROGRAM.

13 * * *

14 SECTION 2. SECTION 2002-C(C) (1) OF THE ACT IS AMENDED TO
15 READ:

16 Section 2002-C. Duties of public institutions of higher
17 education.

18 * * *

19 (c) Other duties.--Each public institution of higher
20 education shall do all of the following:

21 (1) Agree to accept with full junior standing the
22 associate of arts or associate of science degree [into a] and
23 to apply all COLLEGE-LEVEL credits earned TO FULFILL THE <--
24 DEGREE REQUIREMENTS at the ~~community college~~ PUBLIC <--
25 INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION, including major requirements
26 and general education requirements, toward the parallel
27 baccalaureate DEGREE program as outlined in paragraph (3) [by <--
28 the timelines established by the Transfer and Articulation
29 Oversight Committee but] no later than December 31, [2011] <--
30 2023. For purposes of this paragraph, an associate of arts or

1 associate of science degree is a degree designed primarily
2 for transfer to a baccalaureate institution and must contain
3 a minimum of 60 credits. The following shall apply:

4 ~~(i) A student transferring between public~~ <--
5 ~~institutions of higher education WITH AN ASSOCIATE OF~~ <--
6 ~~ARTS OR ASSOCIATE OF SCIENCE DEGREE FROM A PUBLIC~~
7 ~~INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION WHO IS TRANSFERRING INTO~~
8 ~~A PARALLEL BACCALAUREATE DEGREE PROGRAM AT ANOTHER PUBLIC~~
9 ~~INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION SHALL BE AWARDED FULL~~
10 ~~JUNIOR STANDING AND shall not be required to~~
11 ~~satisfactorily complete more than 60 credits to earn a~~
12 ~~120 credit baccalaureate degree in a parallel program,~~
13 ~~regardless of the courses the student took to earn the~~
14 ~~associate degree prior to transferring.~~ <--

15 ~~(ii) A student shall have the same requirements for~~
16 ~~admission to a particular academic program at a public~~
17 ~~institution of higher education and for retention as a~~
18 ~~student who began education at that public institution of~~
19 ~~higher education., UNLESS REQUIRED TO MEET ACCREDITATION~~ <--
20 ~~OR EXTERNAL LICENSURE OR CERTIFICATION STANDARDS.~~

21 ~~(II) A STUDENT TRANSFERRING FROM ONE PUBLIC~~
22 ~~INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION TO ANOTHER PUBLIC~~
23 ~~INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION SHALL HAVE THE SAME~~
24 ~~REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION TO A PARTICULAR ACADEMIC~~
25 ~~PROGRAM AND FOR RETENTION AS A STUDENT WHO BEGAN THEIR~~
26 ~~POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION AT THE RECEIVING INSTITUTION.~~

27 ~~(iii) A student transferring to a~~ INTO A PARALLEL <--
28 ~~baccalaureate DEGREE program with an associate of science~~ <--
29 ~~or associate of arts degree in a parallel academic~~ <--
30 ~~program shall be guaranteed admission to the parallel~~

1 academic BACCALAUREATE DEGREE program, subject to <--
2 capacity, as long as the student meets THE criteria for <--
3 admission required of students who began THEIR education <--
4 at a State System university THE RECEIVING INSTITUTION. <--

5 (iv) A university PUBLIC INSTITUTION OF HIGHER <--
6 EDUCATION may designate majors or programs of study that
7 are limited access by reason of accreditation, clinical
8 or resource-based capacity.

9 (V) A STUDENT TRANSFERRING FROM A PUBLIC INSTITUTION <--
10 OF HIGHER EDUCATION WITH AN ASSOCIATE OF ARTS OR
11 ASSOCIATE OF SCIENCE DEGREE OR WHO HAS COMPLETED 30
12 CREDITS OF FOUNDATION COURSES, AS DEFINED BY THE TRANSFER
13 AND ARTICULATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE, SHALL HAVE
14 SATISFIED THE GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS AT THE
15 RECEIVING INSTITUTION, WITH POSSIBLE EXCEPTIONS MADE FOR
16 THE FOLLOWING, PROVIDED THAT THE EXCEPTIONS DO NOT EXTEND
17 THE STUDENT'S TIME TO THE DEGREE:

18 (A) ONE SIGNATURE GENERAL EDUCATION COURSE OF UP
19 TO THREE CREDITS, IF APPLICABLE.

20 (B) A PRESCRIBED GENERAL EDUCATION COURSE
21 REQUIRED FOR THE MAJOR, IF NOT SATISFACTORILY
22 COMPLETED.

23 (C) GENERAL EDUCATION OVERLAYS SATISFIED IN
24 ADVANCED COURSES IN THE MAJOR.

25 * * *

26 Section 2 3. The act is amended by adding sections to read: <--
27 Section 2003.1-C. Guaranteed admission.

28 An A PUBLIC institution of higher education shall ensure the <--
29 following:

30 (1) An undergraduate student transferring from a public

1 community college WITH AN ASSOCIATE OF ARTS OR ASSOCIATE OF <--
2 SCIENCE DEGREE shall be guaranteed admission into the
3 parallel BACCALAUREATE DEGREE program at an A PUBLIC <--
4 institution of higher education except in programs that have
5 mandated admission requirements, including, BUT NOT LIMITED <--

6 TO:

7 (i) A program for teacher preparation.

8 (ii) A program requiring an audition.

9 (iii) A program with GPA requirements.

10 (iv) A program with additional entrance requirements
11 imposed by an accreditor.

12 (2) Undergraduate STARTING WITH THE 2024 SPRING <--

13 SEMESTER, UNDERGRADUATE students from a community college in
14 this Commonwealth with an associate degree who fulfill the
15 requirements of paragraph (1) shall receive priority for <--

16 admission to the ENROLLMENT IN upper division of a State <--

17 System of Higher Education or State related university

18 program COURSEWORK AT THE RECEIVING INSTITUTION over out-of- <--

19 State students.

20 Section 2003.2-C. Articulation agreements. <--

21 (a) Agreements. Any agreements between community colleges
22 and institutions of higher education shall ensure the following:

23 (1) For the purpose of transferring credits between a
24 community college and a public institution of higher
25 education, no articulation agreements under this article
26 shall be required. Those portions of articulation agreements
27 which place requirements on students or community colleges
28 above those required by this article shall no longer be
29 valid.

30 (2) For the purpose of accepting students from a

~~community college with at least 60 credits as a student with junior standing to a public institution of higher education, no articulation agreements under this section shall be required. Those portions of articulation agreements which place requirements on students or community colleges above those required by this article shall no longer be valid.~~

~~(b) Validity. The provisions of section 2007 C shall not apply to this section.~~

~~Section 2003.3 C. Reports to General Assembly.~~

~~For each academic year, the department shall PRESCRIBE DATA REQUIREMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED BY A PUBLIC INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND report to the General Assembly the following:~~

~~(1) Details of the progress made by an A PUBLIC institution of higher education and an institution that elects to participate under section 2006-C in furtherance of enabling the transfer of credits between institutions, and which recommends further action to be taken to ensure all students which have completed credits in community colleges, shall be able to transfer those credits to an institution of higher education.~~

~~(2) Details of the ability of a student to transfer from community colleges to institutions of higher education, including the ability of students to graduate from institutions of higher education. The report under this section shall annually identify any issues encountered by students in transferring from community colleges to institutions of higher education, as well as issues encountered by transfer students in graduating from institutions of higher education.~~

~~(3) Any other information related to student transfer,~~

1 awarding of credit for prior learning or difficulties in the
2 ability of a student to transfer between public institutions
3 of higher education.

4 Section 2003.4-C 2003.3-C. Dispute resolution. <--

5 The department shall establish and maintain a dispute
6 resolution committee for disputes arising over the acceptance of
7 transfer students and credits. The dispute resolution committee
8 shall:

9 (1) Be composed of the following membership:

10 (i) The Secretary of Education or a designee, who
11 shall serve as chair of the dispute resolution committee.

12 (ii) Three members representing community colleges.

13 (iii) Three members representing the State System of
14 Higher Education.

15 (iv) One member representing State-related
16 institutions.

17 (v) One member representing independent institutions
18 of higher education that have elected to participate
19 under section 2006-C.

20 (vi) Other members as appointed by the chair of the
21 committee to the dispute resolution committee.

22 (2) Continue to develop dispute resolution policies and
23 procedures to be utilized when disputes arise relating to the
24 transfer and application of credits under this article.

25 (3) Resolve disputes involving disagreement over the
26 transfer or award of credits or the placement of students
27 between community colleges and institutions of higher
28 education.

29 (4) Resolve appeals from students transferring from
30 community colleges who have been denied acceptance to an

1 institution of higher education after the completion of an
2 associate degree at a community college or who have been
3 denied the acceptance of COLLEGE-LEVEL credits completed at a <--
4 community college.

5 (5) Report decisions regarding dispute resolutions and
6 appeals as well as the dispute resolution committee's reasons
7 for those decisions. Reports under this paragraph shall be
8 provided regularly to institutions of higher education and
9 community colleges to inform the application of the
10 articulation process.

11 Section 3 4. Sections 2004-C(b) and (c) (5), 2005-C(4) (II) <--
12 and 2007-C of the act are amended to read:

13 Section 2004-C. Transfer and Articulation Oversight Committee.

14 * * *

15 [(b) Dispute resolution subcommittee.--

16 (1) The chair of the committee shall appoint a dispute
17 resolution subcommittee comprised of:

18 (i) Three members appointed under subsection (a) (1)

19 (ii) (A).

20 (ii) Three members appointed under subsection (a) (1)

21 (ii) (B).

22 (iii) One member appointed under subsection (a) (1)

23 (ii) (D).

24 (2) The chair of the committee may add members to the
25 dispute resolution subcommittee.

26 (3) The dispute resolution subcommittee shall develop
27 dispute resolution policies and procedures to be utilized
28 when disputes arise relating to the transfer and application
29 of credits under this article.]

30 (c) Duties of Transfer and Articulation Oversight

1 Committee.--The committee shall:

2 * * *

3 [(5) Submit an annual report to the General Assembly
4 that details the progress made by the public institutions of
5 higher education and institutions that elect to participate
6 under section 2006-C in furtherance of enabling the transfer
7 of credits between such institutions and which recommends
8 further action to be taken.]

9 * * *

10 SECTION 2005-C. DUTIES OF DEPARTMENT. <--

11 THE DEPARTMENT SHALL:

12 * * *

13 (4) PROVIDE FOR AN ELECTRONIC DATABASE OR SOFTWARE
14 PROGRAM AND PORTAL FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING ACCESS TO ALL
15 OF THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION ON AN INTERNET WEBSITE:

16 * * *

17 (II) THE ANNUAL REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AS
18 REQUIRED BY SECTION [2004-C(C) (5)] 2003.2-C.

19 Section 2007-C. Applicability.

20 [Nothing] Except as otherwise provided, nothing in this
21 article shall [do any of the following]:

22 (1) Preclude any institution of higher education from
23 establishing institution-to-institution articulation
24 agreements.

25 (2) Void articulation agreements that have been
26 established prior to the effective date of this section.

27 Section 4 5. This act shall take effect in 60 days. <--